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The Journal Register

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EDUCATION

Burnout? It's real and happening here, survey reveals

By Kayleigh Thomas
Correspondent

PALMER — Palmer School Committee members discussed an employee feedback survey at its Dec. 15 meeting and the results indicated the ongoing pandemic and a decrease in resources may be the cause of considerable staff burnout.

An employee feedback survey was conducted to collect respondents' opinions on Palmer School District procedures. The survey had 108 respondents, which included 20 paraprofessionals, four office support staff, 15 related service providers, 65 teachers, and four admin-

istrators.

Participants were provided with statements in which they were asked to choose one of five responses: strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, or strongly agree. The statements were aligned with COVID-19 and focused on employee burnout, value and support, and student concerns.

The survey also included the opportunity for respondents to provide individual comments that were compiled and forwarded to the school committee. Chairperson Bonny Rathbone shared the themes repeated across comments.

"There were some things that

kept coming up over and over again — discipline, staff retention, substitutes, dress code, staff morale, many of the things we talked about numerous times," she said.

Rathbone assured those who participated in the survey their responses won't be discarded or filed away.

"We as a school, we as a committee, are going to work on helping to solve a lot of these problems and to ensure all of the staff members feel valued at Palmer Public schools because without all of you, the school system does not work. All of you play a very important role in the day to day functioning of the Palm-

er public schools."

Joseph Nompleggi agreed with not having the survey filed away and it's an important matter, he said.

"There's a lot of points that were made that aren't just specific to this profession, but the entire world is being affected by it: staff shortages, rule changes, new technology to learn as a result of remote learning and hybrid work," he said. "It's all leading to burnout and it's happening everywhere."

According to the survey, 32.4% of respondents strongly agreed they are feeling more burned out than last year. The majority of respondents from the survey felt duties and

ability to work sufficiently had been affected by COVID.

Nompleggi said, "it's just a result of where we are with the pandemic. I think the only real solution is for everyone to understand that and take it back for a second and understand that everybody you're looking at is going through the same stress and has the same problems you're dealing with and just be kind to each other."

The survey recognized the stress increase in all staff employees involved with hybrid instruction, additional testing instruction and extra meetings.

Anthony Braden added, "I

agree COVID has a lot to do with it. Teachers, administration, and paras are stressed out, people are getting sick still, we still have flu season, we have things out there besides COVID, but you throw it together and it definitely seems like something that is never going to end, but I always try to remain hopefully optimistic."

There are some things occurring at the school that aren't happening anywhere else, though, according to Nompleggi.

"That is the students that have missed two years of worth of edu-

BURNOUT | page 9

CHRISTMAS CAROLS

Sunday service will celebrate and educate with music and stories



Courtesy Photo

On Sunday, Dec. 26, First Church of Monson will be hosting a special service that will include the stories of three classic Christmas carols. Musical performance to be included.

By Jonah Snowden
jsnowden@turley.com

MONSON — This holiday season, the Music Committee of the First Church of Monson invites all residents to stop by and celebrate Christmas through story and song on Dec. 26.

On Sunday, the church service will feature the stories of three carols, including "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear," "Bring a Torch Jeannette, Isabella," and "Rudolf the Red-Nose Reindeer." Member of First Church Gay Paluch said although this is not an annual event, the Sunday services after Christ-

mas usually focuses on Christmas carols. She also said she hopes residents give this upcoming service a chance.

"Bring a Torch Jeannette, Isabella" will be sung in English and French, followed by an organ arrangement of the piece, played by the Director of Music Kiel Krom-

mer, on the three manual Johnson Organ.

"I think one of the purposes is to help people learn the stories about the writing of Christmas carols, how they were written and by whom they were written over the

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TRAIN PROJECT

East-West Rail proposal ends year with a full head of steam

By Michael Harrison
mharrison@turley.com

REGION — If the effort to establish a new commuter rail line with a depot in Palmer was a football game, it's reasonable to say advocates have the ball in scoring position and can smell the end zone.

And just as momentum is often decisive in sports, it's no small factor when a coalition of citizens and public officials are working to get a project over the goal line. There's an unprecedented pot of federal money just waiting to be spent on infrastructure around the country. An influential congressional delegation backs the project. So does U.S. Labor Secretary Marty Walsh. And, for good measure, one major vocal proponent, state Sen. Eric Lesser, just happens to be good friends with U.S. Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg.

"Frankly it was kind of dismissed, but we are now at the cusp of being able to see this happen," Lesser said during a recent Pioneer Valley Planning Commission meeting.

The PVPC is another of the stakeholders that's helped lug the ball down the field for the better part of a decade. Its diverse array of economic and municipal policy experts insist an East-West rail that would not only connect Western Mass to Boston in a shade under two hours, but link the area to Hartford and New York would encourage large scale commerce and growth.

And despite the COVID-19 pandemic, the past two years have been pivotal, including overcoming Gov. Baker's reluctance to the idea and wrangling over \$1 million for a comprehensive — albeit flawed, some critics say — feasibility study

by MassDOT. While those critics are primarily concerned the study underestimates potential ridership by more than 50% by failing to account for passengers from the Hartford area — they have been buoyed by most of its other findings. Locally, groups like Citizens for a Palmer Rail Stop and members of the Palmer Rail Steering Committee, as well as town officials, are encouraged that each of MassDOT's alternatives include a depot in Palmer, which came to life in the late 19th century when train travel was introduced to the area and was a thriving rail hub until the station was closed in 1971.

The recent PVPC meeting included Lyle Wray, executive director emeritus of Hartford-based Capitol Region Council of Governments and a fellow of the National Academy of Public Administration.

"It was not primarily transportation-related," Wray said about the idea of creating the East-West rail line.

"It came out of an economic study. The bottom line is, our region is underperforming economically and this a potential game-changer that could change the trajectory of our joint economy in Hartford and Springfield," referring to those cities in a regional sense.

Also at the meeting, held virtually over Zoom — like all the preceding meetings since the pandemic — was Meredith Slesinger, rail and transit division administrator at MassDOT, who presented the agency's white paper.

"I appreciate all the passion the stakeholders bring to this topic," she said. Among other things, the white paper recommends:

RAIL | page 9

SOUNDS FOR THE SEASON

Monson High hosts 'Winter Dreams' concert and art show

By Jonah Snowden
jsnowden@turley.com

MONSON — To help set the Christmastime mood, Monson High School's Music and Art Department presented "Winter Dreams" last week.

The Dec. 16 concert featured performances from the Grade 7-8 Band and Chorus, 9-12 Band and Chorus and 7-12 Chorus. Numbers included "Peppermint Winter" by Adam Young, "Waltz No. 2" by Dmitri Shostakovich, "Morning" by Beck Hansen and "Bouncing

Around the Room" by Phish. The event was arranged and conducted by Monson High School Music Director Kenneth Topham. Students of MHS art instructor Sandra Gianfriddo also has their paintings and pottery on display before and during the show.

Topham said traditionally, he and the students start rehearsing for the concert in October. He also said students give input about would like to perform.

"I like to have everybody have a little bit of say into what goes into, so it's fun," Topham said.

"It's important to educate the people, students and audience, but it's a lot easier when everybody is



During the concert, the 7-8 Grade Chorus performed "Pure Imagination" from "Charlie and The Chocolate Factory" by Leslie Bricusse and Anthony Newley, "Peppermint Winter" by Adam Young and "Bouncing Around the Room" by Phish.



Turley Publications staff photos by Jonah Snowden

The Grade 7-8 Band performed "Two Greig Sketches" by Edward Greig, "Chorale in Bb" by John O' Reilly, "Holiday Sampler" by John O' Reilly and "All for Chanukah" by Nicholas Fuerte.



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AZREAL

Here's Azreal rocking her Christmas gear in front of her "staff" — the Narreau family of Palmer.

Do you have a pet that makes your life special? We feature your pets (all pets are welcome — not just cats and dogs!) here and on Facebook every week. Just email a high-quality jpg and some information, including your pet's name, your name, and town, to mharrison@turley.com.

Correction

A story in last week's Journal Register about the Town of Palmer lowering its tax rate contained an error. The various exemptions for senior citizens and disabled veterans mentioned in the story were discussed by town council, but were not approved.

Accuracy is our No. 1 priority. If you spot an error in the Journal Register, please email mharrison@turley.com.

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COMMUNITY

Annual Yule Jog draws runners of all levels for fun, good cause

By Kayleigh Thomas
Correspondent

LUDLOW — Red Bridge Running Club held its fourth annual Yule Jog on Dec. 11 at Iron Duke Brewing.

Red Bridge Running Club has been around for five years, with 15 members, based out of Ludlow, Palmer, and Wilbraham. The club organizes runs, races, and events to encourage fellow runners and benefit the community.

Proceeds from this year's event benefited the Ludlow Boys and Girls Club.

The Yule Jog, according to Red Bridge Running club member and co-founder, Teresa Czepier, is an untimed race and is open to anyone of any fitness level or age. The event made its return after last year's edition was called off during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Joggers started at Iron Duke Brewery and made their way up State Street and along Winsor Street before heading onto East Street to return to the starting location. Volunteers had directed the route for participants who joined the event.

Springfield resident Viron Grummz explained why he participated in the Yule Jog.

"I just thought since I'm training and staying in shape, this would be a great opportunity to start. I just kept my pace nice and slow," he said.

Czepier described how it felt to be able to have the event run this year.

"It's so energizing and wonderful that people can come out and we can actually do it," she said.

"This year we are actually able to double the benefit. We got to partner with the Ludlow Boys and Girls Club," she said.

The Ludlow Boys and Girls Club offers youth programs and activities as well as programs for local adults.

The Red Bridge Running Club and the Ludlow Boys and Girls Club partnered together to create a scholarship in honor of the late Darlene J. Rae, who was known as someone who enjoyed giving back to the community.

"Darlene was a very energized and active member of the community and Ludlow Boys and Girls Club," Czepier said.

"The scholarship fund will also enable kids to have that same experience and hopefully lead their communities in the future."

Ludlow Boys and Girls Club relationship events coordinator Christina Jardine added, "the Red Bridge Running Club has taken an idea that we've always wanted to do, have a run, and knocked it out of the park. To be able to do this as a tribute to Darlene is wonderful," she said.

"Darlene was a huge (part of) the club being a board member, volunteer and club kid herself. Being able to honor her legacy after passing away, it's just a great way of doing something fun and bringing it back to the club is just exactly what Darlene was about."

As part of the Yule Jog, participants were able to contribute to this fund along with local businesses that had contributed over \$2,000 beforehand, including Ginmar Enterprises, Bill's Tire Services, and Baystate Blasting.

Participants also wore festive outfits to spread more holiday cheer.

"It's great to get everyone together, be festive and support a great cause at the same time," Ludlow Boys and Girls Club Treasurer Brandon O'Brien said. "I think it brings out the Holiday season."

For those unable to attend the event, donations are still being accepted. For details, call 413-583-2072.



Santa Claus stands by the finish line to cheer on the runners.



A runner makes his way along Winsor Street during the fourth annual Yule Jog Saturday.



Persistent rain didn't deter people from participating in the Yule Jog that began at Iron Duke in Ludlow.



Tammy Marquis participates in the fourth annual Yule Jog with daughter Nicole Marquis.

Turley Publications photos by Kayleigh Thomas

Runners are filled with excitement as the untimed run begins.



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Tammy Marquis makes her way to the finish line.

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Corrections

The Journal Register will gladly correct factual errors that appear in this paper. Corrections or clarifications will always appear on Page 2 or 3. To request a correction, send information to Editor at mharrison@turley.com, or call 283-8393, extension 236. Corrections may also be requested in writing at: Journal Register, Attn: Editor 24 Water St., Palmer, MA, 01069.

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Exceptions will be made only when the family provides a death certificate and must be pre-paid.

SUNDAY | from page 1

years," Paluch said.

"Many Christmas carols or poems were written at the last minute of Christmas Eve. For example, 'Silent Night' was originally performed on Christmas Eve with a guitar, because the organ broke down in the church and they had to come up with a melody to go with a poem that was already written," Paluch said.

"Most Christmas carols profess a strong Christian faith, even though many were written because the authors were in despair at the time or suffering hardship. They wrote poetry and songs of faith that inspire people. We don't want people to sing Christmas carols and not think about where they came from."

Paluch also said she is excited for the church to possibly be filled with voices raised for the glory of God and the true meaning of Christmas will be celebrated and invites people who practice different religions to participate too.

The church is located at 5 High St. and the service will begin at 10 a.m. After the service, light refreshments will be serviced in the Fellowship Hall.



Turley Publications staff photos by Jonah Snowden
The 9-12 Band performed "Waltz No. 2" by Dmitri Shostakovich, "Oblivion" by Astor Piazzola and "Mr. Sandman" by The Chordettes.

CONCERT | from page 1

being entertained and having fun."

What Topham hopes the students get out of the show is experience performing for a live audience. Those opportunities were few and far between during the pandemic.

"For many of them, this is one of their only opportunities to perform," Topham said. "It's good for people to learn how to deal with some of the nerves and anxiety of going into a performance and I think that's important for the audience. It's important and I'd like to expand people's horizons a little bit and broaden people's musical talents in the same way that mine is being expanded. I also want people to be entertained and to enjoy the performance. I feel that being in a live, musical performance and experiencing life is a unique feeling and you can't get it anywhere else. Being there is a space where music is being performed live is something special about that."

Topham said the concert received a ton of positive feedback.

"People were very happy," Topham said.

"Families were grateful to be out and experiencing music again. Parents were also happy to see their kids on stage, succeeding and doing what they worked so hard to prepare for. It's great to see the students complete their performance and feel that sense of accomplishment."

DEADLINE

The Journal Register has changed its firm deadline for public submissions to Mondays. To get your submission in for that week's edition, email Editor at mharrison@turley.com or call the office at 413-283-8393 by noon on Mondays. We appreciate the cooperation of our readers.

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Grand Trunk Trail gets an upgrade; Plans for expansion underway

By Finn Sliwoski
Correspondent

HOLLAND — When asked about the latest developments following this month's Holland Open Space and Trails Committee meeting, Chairman Richard Haller reported improvements that have been made to part of the Grand Trunk Trail, the popular 6.2-mile section of scenic hiking trails in the area.

The parking area and trailhead were improved this fall by the spreading of \$1,800 worth of gravel, which was provided by the town of Brimfield. Nearly a dozen volunteers worked from four to seven hours to accomplish the task, along with the help of two dump trucks, a large loader, and a tractor. The group was able to spread all of the material in a days' work.

According to Haller, "The labor, materials and equipment are estimated to have a value of \$4,750. In addition to accomplishing major improvements to the trail, the day provides a model for using volunteers and materials purchased with a limited budget to supply a substantial match for the Massachusetts Trail Grant for which we hope to be applying. If successful, that grant could enable construction to begin on a bridge crossing the Quinebaug River."

The construction of the bridge would be one more step toward connecting the Holland and Southbridge Rail Trail Systems. The long term goal is to create a 66-mile regional trail system known as the Titanic Rail Trail, which will run from Palmer to Franklin Massachusetts.

Another topic of discussion at the Trails Committee meeting was the Sichel property in Holland, located off of Stafford Road. The Opacum Land Trust, through The Stevens Brook Community Forest, is a conservation project partnering with the town of Holland and working to acquire 153 of the 170 acres involved in the project to be dedicated to providing the first significant town-owned open space. It will provide outdoor recreation to residents and visitors, including hiking trails, cross-country skiing, nature viewing, hunting and fishing.

Stevens Brook, a cold water fishery and the second largest source of fresh water to Hamilton Reservoir, runs through the center of the property and there are plans to improve and repair the existing bridge that crosses it. Protection and conservation

of this land ensures water quality for the lake.

When asked about the acquisition of the property, Haller noted that progress has been slow, largely due to the fact that the title of the property must be certified by Massachusetts Land Court before the town can acquire it and construction of the trail system can begin. According to Haller, the COVID pandemic has been a major contributor to the slow progress.

Haller went on to say "The town has done everything required, and we are hoping that the situation will be resolved soon, but no one can say for sure when Holland will actually acquire the land. When it does, we have gravel ready to create parking for a trailhead and commitment from the Highway Department to construct it. We also have a handsome kiosk ready to be installed."

Hikers and nature lovers alike can look forward to new local outdoor adventures when these plans are realized.

For more information on how you can help support the purchase and permanent conservation of this property, contact the Opacum Land Trust by email at ehood@opacumlt.org, or leave a voice mail with your



Turley Publications photo by Finn Sliwoski
The town of Brimfield spread \$1,800 worth of gravel on the Grand Trunk Trail parking area and trailhead recently.

contact information at 508-347-9144, or visit the website at opacumlt.org.

A fifth grader in Holland, Finn Sliwoski is our student contributor.

Student Council launches formal wear drive for prom season

By Jonah Snowden
jsnowden@turley.com

MONSON — With prom season fast approaching, comes the struggle to find a good prom dress as well. Fortunately, the Monson High School Student Council is finding a solution to this problem.

The council is currently collecting prom dresses, high heels, boots and other accessories for any ladies who might need some assistance dressing for prom, which is scheduled to take place sometime in May. MHS Student Council Rep. Tyler Lloyd said she brought this idea up after thinking about the girls who cannot afford to purchase a prom dress, but still want to go to prom.

"I was thinking at the time I might as well collect the shoes, jewelry and other stuff that goes with it because some people can't afford to buy this fancy jewelry," Lloyd said.

"I came up with this idea and brought it to the student council and we decided that it would be a good idea to get the word out so that when prom comes down, people can rent dresses for the amount of money it would take to dry clean them."

Lloyd said although there isn't necessarily a deadline for people to donate dresses and accessories, the council will probably stop collecting items around mid-April. Not only is the council looking out for their fellow students at the high school, but Lloyd said they are looking into expanding the opportunity to rent prom dresses to other school districts in the area.

"When I was growing up, I had to pay for all of my stuff myself," Lloyd said.

"I know that a lot of people are going through the same thing, where they don't have enough money to buy a prom dress because they have to pay for it themselves. Some people don't have a job or people who are just supporting themselves, but still want to experience the fun of prom and socializing with everybody. Prom itself is a great experience and I think that even if you don't have enough money, you should still experience that part of high school."

Lloyd also encourages fellow students to get involved with the student council.

"Anyone who wants to join the council can come to the meeting every Wednesday at seven in the morning," Lloyd said.

"Everybody's welcome. I feel like



Courtesy Photo

MHS Student Council Rep. Tyler Lloyd and classmates are collecting dresses, accessories, and shoes for students who will need them for this year's prom.

being on the council, the best part is that like most of the students want activities in high school to make it memorable."

Anyone interested in donating to the MHS Student Council can call or text 413-284-7503.

Gift shop closed, calendars for sale

PALMER — The Baystate Wing Hospital Gift Shop, which had re-opened recently, is once again temporarily closed because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Lotto calendars for 2022 are still available, however, at the Day and Night Diner or by calling 413-283-5759 or 413-204-2368.

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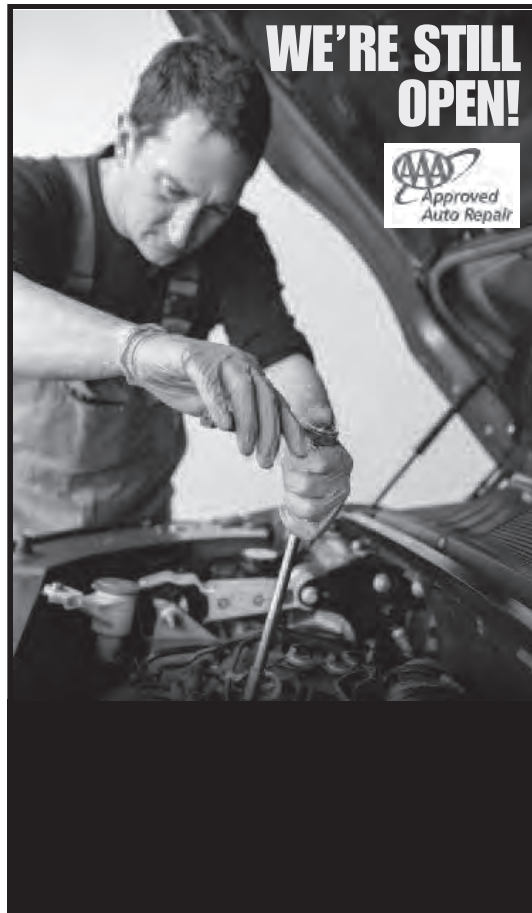
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Viewpoints

editorial

Dear Readers,
In the spirit of Christmas we are sharing the letter that young Virginia O’Hanlon, 8, wrote to the editor of New York’s *Sun*, and the quick response was printed as an unsigned editorial Sept. 21, 1897. Written by veteran newsman Francis Pharcellus Church, the editorial has since become the most reprinted in newspaper editorial. Enjoy, and may you have a happy holiday season.

Eileen Kennedy

DEAR EDITOR: I am 8 years old. Some of my little friends say there is no Santa Claus. Papa says, ‘If you see it in The Sun it’s so.’ Please tell me the truth; is there a Santa Claus?
Virginia O’Hanlon.
115 West Ninety-fifth Street.

Virginia, your little friends are wrong. They have been affected by the skepticism of a skeptical age. They do not believe except they see. They think that nothing can be which is not comprehensible by their little minds. All minds, Virginia, whether they be men’s or children’s, are little. In this great universe of ours man is a mere insect, an ant, in his intellect, as compared with the boundless world about him, as measured by the intelligence capable of grasping the whole of truth and knowledge.

Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus. He exists as certainly as love and generosity and devotion exist, and you know that they abound and give to your life its highest beauty and joy. Alas! how dreary would be the world if there were no Santa Claus. It would be as dreary as if there were no Virginias. There would be no childlike faith then, no poetry, no romance to make tolerable this existence. We should have no enjoyment, except in sense and sight. The eternal light with which childhood fills the world would be extinguished.

Not believe in Santa Claus! You might as well not believe in fairies! You might get your papa to hire men to watch in all the chimneys on Christmas Eve to catch Santa Claus, but even if they did not see Santa Claus coming down, what would that prove? Nobody sees Santa Claus, but that is no sign that there is no Santa Claus. The most real things in the world are those that neither children nor men can see. Did you ever see fairies dancing on the lawn? Of course not, but that’s no proof that they are not there. Nobody can conceive or imagine all the wonders there are unseen and unseeable in the world.

You may tear apart the baby’s rattle and see what makes the noise inside, but there is a veil covering the unseen world which not the strongest man, nor even the united strength of all the strongest men that ever lived, could tear apart. Only faith, fancy, poetry, love, romance, can push aside that curtain and view and picture the supernal beauty and glory beyond. Is it all real? Ah, Virginia, in all this world there is nothing else real and abiding.

No Santa Claus! Thank God! he lives, and he lives forever. A thousand years from now, Virginia, nay, 10 times 10,000 years from now, he will continue to make glad the heart of childhood.



DAVE GRANLUND © www.davegranlund.com

Taking on holly propagation

My holly bush is loaded with berries this year! Others must be just as fortunate, because there seems to be at least a few of my readers interested in propagating the plant. In fact, one reader is hoping that the branch sprouts roots right in her vase of cut flowers. Here is Emilee’s question: “I can just imagine this holly growing in my yard. Is there any chance the stems will form roots if I let them sit in the vase for awhile? If so, about how long will it take?”

Unfortunately, you have a couple of things going against you in your attempt to root holly and grow it in your yard. First, the holly you were given in your bouquet may very well be from a variety that it not hardy in our area. Just like cut flowers that are flown in to the local florist from far away, the holly may very well have been too. In fact, I read recently that there are very few commercial holly orchards in the eastern U.S.

Secondly, water is not the best medium in which to root plants, although we all have had success using this method with ivies, begonias and other common houseplants. It is far better to use a rooting medium that will texturally mimic the soil in which the plant will grow; this only makes sense because inevitably the cutting will need to be transplanted. Paul Rogers, my good friend and fellow horticulturist, coined the term “watery roots.” I can just imagine how difficult of a time those watery roots would have trying to make their way into real soil, with sand, small rocks and such after being used to zero resistance. Talk about transplant shock!

If you’d still like to continue with your science experiment, recut and insert the stems into an appropriate rooting medium such as a mixture of peat and perlite or pine bark. Cut just below a node (the bump from which leaves form) and gently remove the berries and all but the top few leaves. If you can find a rooting

hormone suitable for semi-hardwood cuttings all the better. This will hasten the formation of roots. Just give the stem a quick dip into the powder and tap off the excess. Water well and put the pot with the cutting into a plastic bag to increase humidity and keep the stem from wilting. It may help to make a tent of sorts so that the plastic doesn’t rest right on the cutting. The specimen should go in the shade and with any luck roots will form in approximately two months, although it may take longer. Give it another couple of months to form a healthy root ball before transplanting into a larger container. Once the weather warms, plant the rooted cutting outdoors into a “nursery bed.” This is a space

in your yard where you can keep an eye on it and easily maintain it for a season or two before finally sinking it into its permanent spot. If you want to attempt this with cuttings from a bush in your yard, the best time to harvest the stems is August through November.

Don’t forget that berry production is dependent on pollination. Most nurseries will recommend that you have one male for every three females in your yard. Further research has indicated that hollies are rather promiscuous; some species are more compatible with one another than once thought, and pollination can occur with plants spaced one-eighth of a mile apart or farther as long as honey bees and other insects are out and working, and flowers are viable.

Good luck! I’ll be anxious to hear how your experiment turned out.

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For the last 28 years, she has held the position of staff horticulturalist at Old Sturbridge Village. She enjoys growing food as well as flowers. Have a question for her? Email it to ekennedy@turley.com with “Gardening Question” in the subject line.

IN THE GARDEN



Roberta McQuaid
Columnist

Can Christmas JOY be lost and found?

What was once put in place – was missing. “It was there! Now it’s gone!”

While frantically and painstakingly retracing her steps, Christi-An found nothing.

“How could this happen”, she mumbled, “I’ll put something else in its place.”

Startled by the time, she gasped, “I’ll be late. ‘Gotta go!”

Although she closed the door behind her, losing what was irreplaceable hung over her, just like the gathering noonday’s grey clouds with its approaching snowstorm.

With the skill of a winter scarf’s weaver, she wove in, out, and around the bustling holiday traffic, across city streets, to a town where she made an apt arrival at a Christmastime event.

At dusk, on her drive home, towering boulevard lights and the shimmering beams of oncoming cars helped dim the memory of what she couldn’t find earlier.

Yet a glimmer of hope lingered, “When I get home, I’ll look again.”

While stalled in “parking lot” traffic, iridescent snowflakes glazed her car’s windshield. Soon, swishing wipers made a clearer view. Scenic landscapes appeared. As fluffy, layered snow sculptured a winter wonderland; a peaceful calmness cloaked and swaddled her anxious concerns.

Instead of frazzled feelings, wisdom whispered: “Is my worried hurriedness robbing me – not only of a treasure – but of happiness?”

Arriving home, getting out of her car, she stopped. Standing in the snow, with arms outstretched, (and with her shoulder bag dangling), she tilted her head back, poked out her tongue, and caught fresh-falling snowflakes. Feeling like a carefree child again, the snow showered her soul with a heaven-sent hush.

Soft, crystal-like crunches beneath her boots not only refreshed her spirit, but renewed her hope.

“I’ll look again. Hope I find it.”

Her apartment’s warmth embraced her. Slipping off her boots, the soft rug cuddled her feet. Gloves pocketed. Coat hung. Purse and keys set aside on the kitchen counter for the next day.

Retracing her steps again, she slipper-socked to her bedroom. As she stood in front of her grandmother’s bureau mirror, she unclasped the substitute pin from her jacket’s lapel. Once again she deeply mourned losing her Mother’s antique brooch.

Stepping closer to see her mirrored reflection clearer – a sharp stab pricked her toe.

“Ouch!”

Reaching down, just under the dresser’s shadowy darkness, she found what was lost.

The sought was found! It was irreplaceable. A substitute could never take its precious, genuine place. Clearer vision brought kneel-down discoveries.

The hand-set, gilded heirloom pin, with the word “JOY” centered inside a holly wreath, sparkled anew! And, as she cupped the precious pin in her hand and brought it close to her heart, in an unfathomable way, Christi-An discovered a renewed, inner JOY.

Yes, amid holiday events and special occasions, authentic, unique, and genuine Christmas JOY can be lost, but it can also be found again.

GUEST COLUMNIST



JOAN E. B. COOMBS

Election letters to the editor welcome

The *Journal Register* welcomes readers to participate in this year’s election campaigns by writing letters to the editor for publication on these pages. Letters of up to 250 words from local residents endorsing candidates on the ballot or discussing campaign issues should be sent to The Journal Register, care of Turley Publications, 24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069, faxed to 413-289-1977 or emailed to mharrison@turley.com. Please include a daytime telephone number for verification purposes (it will not be printed). Letters must be received by noon Monday to be considered for that Thursday’s newspaper. No attack letters will be printed. No letters written by candidates supporting their own candidacy will be printed. If the volume of letters received is larger than the space available in the newspaper, or if the letters become repetitive, the newspaper reserves the right to print a representative sample. No endorsement letters will be printed in the last edition before the election.

For more information, call editor Michael Harrison at 413-283-8393.

Campaign news

As part of its election coverage, the newspaper plans to print stories about contested races for Congress, state Senate, state House, district attorney and Governor’s Council during the weeks leading up to the election, as well as a question-and-answer voters guide. In order to ensure fairness to all candidates, no political press releases will be printed, nor will reporters cover political rallies or fundraisers.

Candidates who wish to further publicize their candidacy, beliefs and events may contact advertising, 413-283-8393 about paid advertising in The Journal Register.

Letters to the editor policy

Letters to the editor should be 250 words or less in length, and guest columns between 500-800 words. No unsigned or anonymous opinions will be published. We require that the person submitting the opinion also include his or her town of residence and home telephone number. We must confirm authorship prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit or withhold any submissions deemed to be libelous, unsubstantiated allegations, personal attacks, or defamation of character.

Please send opinions to:
**The Journal Register
Letter to the Editor
24 Water St.,
Palmer MA 01069,
or by e-mail to:
mharrison@turley.com**

The submission deadline for consideration is Monday at noon.

GUEST COLUMN

Tis’ the season for holiday traditions

By Julie Midura

Spending upwards of an hour wandering through the maze of aromatic evergreens at the local tree farm in an attempt to get four children to agree on the perfect tree for Santa to place the presents under. Stringing the lights while listening to Kenny Rogers and Dolly Parton sing joyfully in the background.

Little hands reaching into holiday storage bins and fingers peeling off the tissue paper to reveal treasured ornaments from years past.

“Remember the year you gave me this one?” one of my children exclaims.

Every year since they were born, I have purchased a new Christmas ornament for each of my children. The ornament needed to have significance: a fun hobby, a favorite activity, a treasured vacation memory. In addition to the store bought ornaments were the construction paper, popsicle stick, paper snowflake handmade treasures that the kids made in school in the weeks leading up to the holidays.

In the early years of their childhood, the lower branches of our tree were heavily decorated, but as the years went by and their hands reached higher and higher, the Christmas tree was no longer bottom heavy. However, the important thing wasn’t where the ornaments were hung, but what the ornaments represented. Because when each of my children reached into their Christmas bin, they pulled out not simply an ornament, but a connection to their past.

So what is really taking place behind these cherished holiday rituals that we repeat year after year?

Family traditions nurture our spirit and strengthen our relationships with our loved ones. The reason why we keep these time-honored customs is because they give our children a sense of identity and foster a sense of unity within our families. When families do something together year after year, it becomes a part of who they are and it

instills in them a sense of belonging.

We pass these cherished traditions from one generation to the next because they connect us to our history and help us keep our memories of the past alive. Whether it’s making great grandma’s special recipe, watching the Thanksgiving Day Parade, or reading “The Night Before Christmas” to little ones, traditions provide something that every member of the family can become a part of.

In our family, we spent Christmas Eve hosting an open house for aunts, uncles, cousins and grandparents. As the evening wore on, we gathered everyone in front of the nativity set, from the oldest generation to the youngest. We placed birthday candles on cupcakes, then sang happy birthday while the youngest child carefully placed Baby Jesus in the manger. The excitement in the children’s eyes as they blew out the candles and licked the sweet frosting off the cupcakes was overshadowed only by the joy in the eyes of the grandparents who watched them.

On Christmas morning, the kids raced to the fireplace, delighted to find Santa’s boot prints amid a smattering of soot and dirt. After checking the holiday cookie plate to insure that Santa ate every last one, we lit several candles, plugged in the Christmas lights, and turned on the holiday music.

We opened the presents one by one, from the youngest child to the oldest adult. Each person patiently waited until their turn came around again before opening another gift. We enjoyed watching each other tear off the wrappings and opened the box with delight. We even took a “breakfast intermission” an hour into opening presents so that we could enjoy a delicious breakfast of bacon, eggs, bagels and lox. As the children grew older, Christmas day became less about the gifts and more about enjoying the traditions they grew up with.

It’s never too late to create your own unique family customs. Don’t try to implement a ‘perfect’ experience, rather, just have fun doing something that your family loves

and make it a ritual that they can count on year after year. The most important thing to remember is that the traditions should bring your family together and create memories that will last a lifetime.

This year, our Christmas Eve rituals will remain much the same as they have for the past decade, with one exception. We now have grandchildren who are just about the right height to place baby Jesus in the manger. The honor has been passed from OUR children to theirs.

And so it is with family traditions. They remind us of the past, keep us mindful in the present, and maybe, for a fleeting moment, hint at our future.

This the first year that Tom and I will awake to an empty house on Christmas day. There will be no feet running down the stairs in the wee hours of the morning. No giggling children knocking at the door of our bedroom. Our adult children will awake in homes of their own, keeping some of the old customs they grew up with, while also creating new ones.

But the Christmas music will still be played. The candles will still be lit. Tom and I will still take turns opening our gifts, one at a time. We will honor the traditions that we created for our family so many years ago, because we understand that the memories of those who are no longer with us will live on in the precious traditions we hold dear.

We created rituals that will allow the future to know the past. For when the oldest hands touch the littlest hearts. Because as generations meet and hearts merge, connections are forged that will be remembered long after the last candles are extinguished.

Wishing you all a joyous holiday season and a very merry New Year!

Find us on Instagram @morethanthemountain.

Julie Midura, who usually writes about her and Tom’s hiking adventures, is a resident of Ludlow.

Can we find our way to the common good?

By Lee H. Hamilton
Guest columnist

I still remember a question I got years ago. It was at a public meeting in southern Indiana, in one of those squat, featureless cinder-block buildings you find all across the country. This young woman stood up and commented that I’d traveled throughout the U.S. and had met all kinds of people. So, she wanted to know: What was my impression of Americans? I didn’t even hesitate: The American people are fundamentally decent, I told her.

I still believe this. And when I say it, I’m not talking about a bare majority. Most Americans are good people.

Why even mention this? Because at the moment, we live in a country where a lot of Americans don’t believe it. They think fellow citizens who belong to a different political party are at best misguided and at worst, evil. We have public officials, who want nothing more than to do a good job and stick by the laws, resigning because they’re tired of the threats to themselves and their families. Civic-minded Americans who believe in the institutions of democracy are steering clear of volunteering because they’re afraid of the anger and physical danger they may face.

I don’t think this happened by accident. There are major, powerful forces working to divide us. Some are pernicious, others are just looking to make themselves more powerful. Media companies and political commentators find that they can make money, a lot of money, by putting out divisive information. Politicians have discovered that they can benefit politically by appealing to their base and treating the other side as the enemy. Countries such as Russia and China spend enormous time and money sowing seeds of division in our country so they can make our system of democracy look bad and weaken us as a country.

There’s an antidote for this, but it’s not going to be easy: All of us, ordinary citizens and politicians alike, have to restore in our lives a belief in the importance of the common good, to ask ourselves not what’s good for any one of us, or for our party or business or people

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Baby's First Christmas
2021



Kora Marie Ketterman

April 8, 2021

Parents: Randy & Haley Ketterman
Grandparents: Daniel & Cheryl Comeau, Monson,
Randy & Lori Ketterman, Monson



Hudson Tyler Nuzzolilli

February 25, 2021

Parents: Vincent & Traci Nuzzolilli, Monson
Sibling: Roman Nuzzolilli
Grandparents: Kevin & Stacey Nuzzolilli,
Richard Holmes & Linda Sanko



Maverick William Mastalerz

July 27, 2021

Parents: Chelsey Reep & Jonathan Mastalerz, Barre
Grandparents: Tina Reep, Monson,
Paul & Caryn Mastalerz, Belchertown



Hazel Anne Cormier

October 7, 2021

Parents: Geoffrey & Ellen Cormier
Grandparents: Tony & Krista Silva, Palmer,
Mark & Deborah Cormier, Worcester



Charlie Lessard

July 8, 2021

Parents: Emma Ruggiero-Sampson & Christopher Lessard, Three Rivers
Grandparents: Doria Rhodes & Jeff Jansen, Belchertown,
Amanda & Vinny Brown, Fitchburg



Connor Shevock

April 9, 2021

Parents: Ben & Ashleigh Shevock, Belchertown
Siblings: Reese & Henry Shevock
Grandparents: Gayle Suzor,
Joe & Joanne Shevock



Myles LaValley

September 10, 2021

Parents: Samantha Paige & Albert LaValley, Westfield
Sibling: Emily Paige



Flora Cecelia Colling

November 17, 2021

Parents: Meaghan Colling & Philipp Moser, Vienna, Austria
Grandparents: Arthur Colling,
Ewal & Eva Moser



Dorothy Jean Johnson

June 26, 2021

Parents: Matthew & Emilyrose (Reardon) Johnson, Rollinsford, NH
Grandparents: Lorri & Patrick Furey, South Hadley,
Beau Reardon, Holyoke,
James & Renee Johnson, Palmer
Great Grandparents: Barbara Grady, Holyoke,
Holland Johnson, Palmer



Ariel Walter Newman

August 6, 2021

Parents: Indira Kenny & Michael Newman, Springfield
Sibling: Adrian Kenneth Newman
Grandparents: Sean & Elaine Connor, Brimfield
Great Grandparents: Russell & Dorothy Jacobs, Springfield,
Suzanne Connor, Feeding Hills



Chase Matthew Creigle

April 11, 2021

Parents: Nick & Nicole Creigle, Belchertown
Grandparents: Jean & George Thompson, Holland,
Jim & Alice McHugh, Springfield,
Amy & Dave Clegg, Sarasota, FL



Noah Robert Dubois

August 17, 2021

Parents: Justin Dubois & Brooke Gorman, Ware
Grandparents: Kelli & Todd Prescott, Ware,
Donna & Robert Dubois, Monson
Great Grandparents: Gail & Robert Arsenault,
Donna Prescott, Ware



Wynonna Mae Wilson

October 29, 2021

Parents: Aubrey Rugani & Dan Wilson, Three Rivers
Grandparents: Debbie & Brian Rugani, Hampden,
Laura & Jon Wilson, Barre



Salvatore Shane Gambino

June 2, 2021

Parents: Jessica Klisiewicz & Angelo Gambino, Monson
Grandparents: Judy Gambino, Palmer,
Nancy Klisiewicz & (the late) Stanley Klisiewicz, Monson



Vincent Stanley Gambino

June 2, 2021

Parents: Jessica Klisiewicz & Angelo Gambino, Monson
Grandparents: Judy Gambino, Palmer,
Nancy Klisiewicz & (the late) Stanley Klisiewicz, Monson



Violet Rebecca Brassard

January 26, 2021

Parents: Tamara Short & Jordan Brassard, Monson
Grandparents: Rebecca Brown, Belchertown,
Stephen Short, Hampden,
Bea & Ted Brassard, Monson,
Roberta Maguire, Monson

Food Bank of Western Mass getting new distribution center

On Monday, Sen. Eric P. Lesser was joined by Chicopee Mayor John Vieau, members of the Chicopee Legislative Delegation, and Andrew Morehouse, executive director of the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts, to announce \$5 million in funding secured to build a food distribution center and headquarters in the City of Chicopee.

Lesser acted as lead sponsor in the Senate, securing this state funding in the ARPA spending bill signed into law on December 13th.

"The Food Bank of Western Mass provides vital services to those in need in our region. With this funding, we have put them in striking distance of their new building capital campaign, which will be located at the heart of the need," Lesser said.

"There has never been a time where the work of the food bank has been more important and we remain committed to working with them to address food insecurity in western mass until it exists no more."

"I would like to express my sincerest gratitude to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts on behalf of The Food Bank board of directors and employees, and most importantly, households across all four counties of Western Massachusetts who struggle to put food on the table," stated Andrew Morehouse, Executive Director of the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts.



Sen. Eric Lesser, joined by members of the Chicopee legislative delegation, Mayor John Vieau, Andrew Morehouse, and FBWM Board Chair Erica Flores, celebrate \$5 million in state funding for a Food Bank of Western Massachusetts distribution center.

Courtesy photo

"This tremendous investment in The Food Bank's future food distribution center and headquarters in Chicopee will enable us to carry out our mission for decades to come. I would like to thank Senator Lesser for leading the charge with his fellow Chicopee state legislators and for the support of the entire Western Massachusetts legislative delegation and Governor Baker. Together, this public-private partnership will achieve our vision of a Western Massachusetts where no one goes hungry and everyone has access to healthy food."

"The Food Bank of Western Mass is a force multiplier," Velis said.

"It is a gift that keeps on giving for so many people over and over again fulfilling so many needs."

"It has been an extraordinary privilege to work on issues like food insecurity," Gomez said.

"\$Five million dollars is an extraordinary amount of money to be able to complete this project and I am happy to be a part of it."

Le Visage Integrative Massage: Grounded in Gratitude

HAMPDEN – Success in business – and in life – comes from hard work, determination, a little luck and a strong support system. All of these factors, in combination, have led to great success for Linda St. Laurent, owner of Le Visage Integrative Massage in Hampden, Massachusetts.

As she celebrates her 25th anniversary, St. Laurent acknowledges her good fortune and credits her supportive network for helping her achieve her professional goals. She extends heartfelt gratitude to her lengthy list of clients, mentors, supporters and colleagues.

Following in her mother's footsteps, St. Laurent enrolled in the Bancroft School of Massage and graduated in 2000. She landed her first job when Jack Tryba, barber/stylist and owner of Center Styling in Sturbridge, invited her to locate her massage practice within his business. He became one of her first and most enthusiastic supporters and mentors. His guidance, advice and friendship during those early years inspired, educated and nurtured her passion for her chosen profession.

Early in her career, St. Laurent found her specialty area



when her mother, Jacqueline St. Laurent, gifted her training sessions with Tom Myers, an expert in KMI structural integration, a technique that restores posture and joint mobility and improves movement efficiency. The training enabled St. Laurent to discern a clear picture of the issues with which her clients present. Using KMI principles, she provides individualized therapy, educates the client on the process and recommends homework to correct old negative patterns.

Twenty-one years after practicing in Sturbridge, St. Laurent reluctantly bid adieu to Tryba as she began a new chapter in Hampden, Massachusetts. When she moved to the western part of the state, Jessica Petit, owner of The Restorative Wellness Center, offered her space within the Center. St. Laurent eagerly accepted the offer and launched Le Visage Integrative Massage.

St. Laurent retained many of her existing clients and continued to grow her practice until 2020 when COVID-19 turned everyday life upside down. The March mandate that year forced her to shutter her doors temporarily.

Undaunted by the unexpected shutdown, St. Laurent quickly pivoted to a virtual relationship with her clients, making weekly calls to offer encouragement, advice and support. With intimate knowledge of each client's particular problem areas, she was able to address their issues remotely. She suggested at-home, self-care techniques to help clients weather the stress of the pandemic and maintain physical and emotional balance. Four months after she was furloughed, St. Laurent was able to reopen and welcomed back most of her clients.

Throughout the last 25 years, St. Laurent's practice has attracted loyal clients from Sturbridge, Southbridge and Northampton in Massachusetts and Putnam and Killingly in Connecticut and is currently at full capacity. She is grateful for the support of her clients, many of whom have been with her for ten years or more.

St. Laurent realizes that she does not operate in a "bubble" but depends upon collaboration with several other professionals. So when KMI or other massage techniques don't adequately address a client's issues, she does not hesitate to refer them to a qualified professional in another discipline. For instance, clients with podiatric problems may need to visit a specialist who can offer foot-related solutions. She works closely with podiatrist Dr. Neil Feldman in Worcester for these clients. Her local referral network also includes chiropractors, hair stylists, electrolysis practitioners and restaurant owners. She is grateful for the support she continues to receive from all in her "inner circle." Additionally, St. Laurent admits that on the business side her practice could not operate successfully without the assistance of her office associate Sally Anderson and her website designer Dina Sexton.

As she celebrates her 25th anniversary, St. Laurent wants to publicly recognize and thank her supporters, particularly her mother, who have collaborated, encouraged and provided love throughout the last quarter century. She is humbled and grateful for all who have participated in her exciting professional journey.



Courtesy photo

Through the rest of the month you can view a display at Monson Free Library about the reforestation of the American Chestnut tree at Flynt Park.

Saving the Chestnut: See the display

MONSON —The Replanting Monson Tree Committee and the Tantasqua Chestnut Club have put together a display at the Monson Free Library on the reforestation of the American Chestnut tree at Flynt Park in Monson.

This display outlines the history of the mighty American Chestnut, the blight that brought this giant to the brink of extinction and the plan to bring this tree back to the glory it once enjoyed. The display will be available through December and has been made possible by a grant from the Mass Cultural Council of Monson.

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BASKETBALL

Monson drops league match to Belchertown

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

BELCHERTOWN—In a span of 48 hours, the Belchertown boys varsity basketball team managed to defeat South Hadley in the Pioneer Valley Tip-Off at the UMass Mullins Center and Bi-County West rival Monson in their home opener.

The outcome of the Orioles home opener was decided by half-time, as they dispatched the Mustangs, 78-29, last Monday night (Dec. 13).

"I thought when we were focused and we ran plays the way we're supposed to, and we passed and cut, we did really well," said Belchertown head coach Matt Stenuis. "When we got up, we got too comfortable. We tried to do things that are outside of what we want to do. We'll take the win, but turnovers in the third quarter are unacceptable. We had too many of them."

Monson and Belchertown split a pair of games during the Fall II season last March.

The Mustangs won the first meeting, which was played inside the Belchertown High School gymnasium, by seven points. The Orioles then celebrated a 13-point road win two days later.

Senior forward Kiernan Corish was the only Belchertown player, who didn't score any points in the first meeting of this season between the two teams. He was helped off the court after suffering an ankle injury while attempting to make a rebound at the end of the first quarter.

"Everyone scored in tonight's game except for Kiernan, who was injured during the first quarter," Stenuis said. "We're hoping that he's going to be fine, but it's too early to tell. He's our sixth man and defensive stopper."

The Orioles defense didn't allow the Mustangs to score more than ten points in each of the four quarters.

"The defense is going to be our calling card this year," Stenuis added. "We played very well defensively in tonight's game. We just need to keep improving in every game that we play."

The two Belchertown players

who reached double digits in the home opener were senior guard Nathan Sajdak, who scored 13 of his game-high 16 points during the opening half, and senior forward Joe Bianco, who finished with 10 points.

The duo of junior guards Tyler McDonald and William Hill each finished the home opener with nine points. Senior forward Evan White added seven points.

Monson, who played their first game of the regular season, had to replace a total of nine players from last year's squad, which went 2-6. Seven of the players listed on this year's varsity roster didn't play basketball last spring.

"We came here looking to compete and we didn't want to lose by 50 points," said Monson head coach Dennis Vacon. "Most of the players who played in tonight's game had never played organized basketball before. We just need to keep improving in every game and we're hoping to play a little bit better the next time that we face Belchertown."

Vacon, who graduated from Monson High School, is beginning his first full season as the varsity basketball coach. Vacon was the interim head coach during the Fall II season. He took over the coaching duties from Joe Trivisonno, who's currently the principle at the Granite Valley Middle School in Monson.

The Mustangs also had a couple of players suffer injuries against the Orioles.

Junior forward Alex Lagacy, who rejoined the varsity team after not playing last spring, suffered a broken nose in the middle of the opening quarter. He made a jumper from the top of the key giving the Mustangs their only lead at 2-0. It was also Lagacy's only points of the contest.

Sophomore guard Colin Beaupre, who's one of the three returning varsity players for Monson, led the way with 10 points. Another returning varsity player for Monson is senior guard Noah Martinson, who scored six points in the season opener.

After falling behind 2-0, the Orioles took control of the game

BASKETBALL

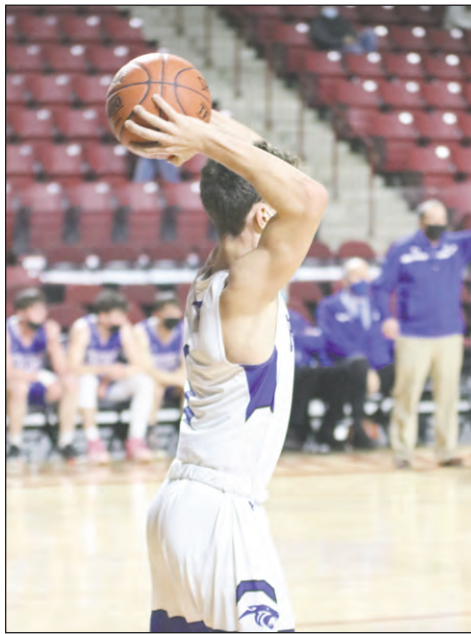
Palmer's falls in 'Tip-off'

AMHERST — On Saturday, Dec. 9, Palmer participated in the Pioneer Valley Tip-Off, a showcase event held on the campus of the University of Massachusetts. Though it was close throughout the first half, the Panthers would lose to Drury 58-49. In the loss, Jack Letendre scored 19 points while Chance Lee and Brady Stahelski scored 12 points each.

Jack Letendre attempts to get a shot off.



Mike Ziemba makes a pass in transition.



Anthony Ukrainets makes an inbound pass.

Photos by Gregory A. Scibelli



Chance Lee lifts a shot for the Panthers.



Brady Stahelski sets up to take a shot.

Pioneers offense struggles in loss



Victoria Stephens shuffles before making a pass.



Christiana Pereira tries to overcome a block to shoot.



Jen Kinney gets the open layup.



Allyson Dube tries to charge through a blocker.



Greenly Lagimoniери takes the tip-off against Hampden Charter.

CHICOPEE — Last Thursday night, the offense for Pathfinder continued to have trouble putting points in the board and Hampden Charter was able take advantage and a 54-22 win. Allyson Dube and Arizona Arbour had seven points each for the Pioneers.

Photos by David Henry
www.sweetdogphotos.com



Tennessee Murphy pushes a bounce pass to her left.



Rylee Bonneau follows through on a shot.



Olivia Chrzan sprints down the left side of the court.

Mustangs overwhelmed by Amherst offense

AMHERST — Last Friday night, Amherst Regional High School welcomed Monson and rode to an easy win 56-23. Monson had

a tough time adjusting to Amherst's pressure defense and struggled to score late in the first half as the Hurricanes pulled away. Tennessee

Murphy and Olivia Chrzan had seven points each in the defeat. Monson is 0-2 on the young season.



Aniah Myrie grabs a loose ball coming off a rebound.



Mya Walker reaches out to try and keep the ball with Monson.

Employees felt the mask mandate had challenged their interaction with students, es-

DEATH NOTICES

Szanderowski, Candi (Santos)
Died Nov. 16, 2019
Services will be private
Beers & Story
Palmer Funeral Home Palmer

The Journal Register OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries. One is a free, brief **Death Notice** listing the name of deceased, date of death and funeral date and place.

The other is a **Paid Obituary**, costing \$100, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice and may include a photograph. **Death Notices & Paid Obituaries** should be submitted through a funeral home to: obits@turley.com.

Exceptions will be made only when the family provides a death certificate and must be pre-paid.

O B I T U A R I E S

Robert J. Deblois, 77



WALES — Robert J. Deblois, 77, passed away Tuesday, Dec. 14, 2021, surrounded by love of his family.

Robert was born in Springfield March 30, 1944, to the late Paul and Anita (Bolduc) Deblois. Robert grew up in Springfield. He served in the U.S. Marines from 1961 to 1967. He was honorably discharged with the rank of sergeant. He was a mason contractor by trade and for many years worked with Vic Archambault Contractors. He raised his family in Wilbraham before re-

tiring to Wales.

Robert had a great sense of humor, enjoyed traveling to the casinos, was a member of various bowling leagues and loved listening to oldies, especially Motown.

Robert leaves his three children; Craig, Michelle and Lisa and their spouses and families; his brother Paul, and his wife along with their children and families.

Lombard Funeral Home



of Monson has been entrusted with the arrangements. All services are private and will be conducted at the Massachusetts Veterans Memorial Cemetery with Military Honors. In lieu of flowers consider a memorial contribution in Roberts name to the Wounded Warriors PO Box 758516 Topeka, KS 66675-8516.

Kenneth P. Foisy, 1952-2021

MONSON — Kenneth P. Foisy, 69, passed away Tuesday, Dec. 14, 2021, surrounded by love, in his home.

Kenneth was born in Springfield to the late August and Pauline (Bedell) Foisy. He has been a resident of Monson for many years. Ken served in the Army Reserves and was a tractor trailer driver before his retirement. He enjoyed antique cars, going to

car shows and traveling to Maine and Vermont.

Ken leaves his loving wife of 49 years, Marlene A. (Chartier) Foisy; their son, George P. Foisy of Monson; two granddaughters, Kaylee Foisy and Ella Foisy both of Monson; and a brother, Douglas Foisy of Monson. Ken was predeceased by his daughter, Jennifer S. Foisy and two brothers, George Foisy and

Stephen Foisy.

Services have been entrusted to Lombard Funeral Home of Monson and will be private. In lieu of flowers please consider a memorial donation in Ken's name to the Alzheimer's Association 311 Arsenal Street Waverstown, MA 02472. For online condolences visit Lombardfuneralhome.com.

Edwin Mastalerz, 62

PALMER — It is with great sadness we announce the passing of Steven Edwin Mastalerz, 62, after a courageous fight of a series of pneumonias. He left peacefully surrounded by his loving family on Tuesday, Dec. 14, 2021, at Baystate Medical Center.

He was the son of Edwin and Joyce (McLean) Mastalerz, and born in Palmer on July 26, 1959.

Steve made a career working as a sheet metalist that would spend his free time hitting the green at Mill Valley, going to his weekly bowling league, Hindsdale trips or trying to be on a hot streak at the black jack table. Unfortunately, many of these hobbies were interrupted when he was paralyzed after back surgery nearly eight years ago. This did

not stop Steve's light from shining or being the jokester everyone loved. Always the life of the party and spent his final weeks being the most admired patient and winning the Best Hair on the floor award.

Steve's proudest accomplishment was being the greatest father to his loving daughters and becoming Pepi.

Steven will be dearly missed by all who knew and loved him. He is survived by his mother Joyce Mastalerz, his two daughters Amanda (Mastalerz) Maselli and her husband Matthew Maselli of Westminster, and Jessica Mastalerz of Fitchburg; his beloved grandson Colton. He is survived by his younger brothers



Ed, Dean, John and his wife Kristy and Matt Mastalerz that will all miss their "Fred-dy". Steve also leaves aunts, uncles, niece and nephews along with his adored PCAs.

Steven is predeceased by his father, Edwin Mastalerz and sister-in-law, Christy Mastalerz.

"Grief is the last act of love we have to give to those we loved. Where there is deep grief, there was great love."

Rites of Committal and Interment will be held privately at Oak Knoll Cemetery, Thorndike Street, Palmer.

Details of Celebration of Life to follow. Visit beersandstory.com.

PALMER

The Palmer Fire Department responded to 13 calls Dec. 13 - 17:

On Monday, Dec. 13, at 11:29 a.m., the department responded to a medical assistance call on River Street. The department returned to service at 12:13 p.m.

On Monday, Dec. 13, at 1:55 p.m., the department responded to a medical assistance call on Shaw Street. The department returned to service at 2:23 p.m.

On Tuesday, Dec. 14, at 12:07 p.m., the department responded to a medical assistance call on Beech Street. The department returned to service, at 12:25 p.m.

On Tuesday, Dec. 14, at 5:45 p.m., the department responded to a call that was cancelled en route. The department returned to service at 5:55 p.m.

On Tuesday, Dec. 14, at 6:26 p.m., the department responded to a medical assistance on Wright Street. The department returned to service at 7:03 p.m.

On Wednesday, Dec. 15, at 1:15 p.m., the department responded to a medical assistance on Fletcher Street. The department returned to service at 1:42 p.m.

On Wednesday, Dec. 15, at 1:42 p.m., the department responded to a call with no incident found on Countryside Drive. The department returned to service at 2:00 p.m.

On Thursday, Dec. 16, at 12:25 p.m., the department responded to a medical assistance call on Hill Street. The department returned to service at 1:08 p.m.

On Friday, Dec. 17, at 7:20 a.m., the

department responded to a vehicle accident on Ware Road. The department returned to service at 8:07 a.m.

On Friday, Dec. 17, at 7:57 a.m., the department responded to a call that was cancelled en route. The department returned to service at 8:27 a.m.

On Friday, Dec. 17, at 1:50 p.m., the department responded to a medical assistance call on Main Street. The department returned to service at 2:36 p.m.

On Friday, Dec. 17, 7:14 p.m., the department responded to a call that was cancelled en route. The department returned to service at 7:21 p.m.

On Friday, Dec. 17, at 8:39 p.m., the department responded to a dumpster or outside trash fire on North Main Street. The department returned to service at 9:03 p.m.

THREE RIVERS

The Three Rivers Fire Department responded to one call Dec. 13 - 19:

On Sunday, Dec. 19, at 4:40 p.m., the department responded to an outside burning complaint on Palmer Street. The department returned to service at 5:05 p.m.

MONSON

The Monson Fire Department responded to five fire calls and 20 EMS calls Dec. 13 - Dec. 19:

On Tuesday, Dec. 14, at 12:04 p.m.,

the department responded to a fire alarm activation on Main Street. The department returned to service at 12:18 p.m.

On Tuesday, Dec. 14, at 5:44 p.m., the department responded to an EMS assistance call on Upper Palmer Road. The department returned to service at 7:31 p.m.

On Tuesday, Dec. 16, at 3:16 a.m., the department responded to a power line on fire call on Wales Road. The department returned to service at 4:40 a.m.

On Thursday, Dec. 16, at 8:00 p.m., the department responded to a burn complaint on Cedar Swamp Road. The department returned to service at 8:25 p.m.

On Friday, Dec. 17, at 6:40 p.m., the department responded to a public assistance call on Bridge Street. The department returned to service at 7:00 p.m.

BONDSVILLE

The Bondsville Fire Department responded to three calls Dec. 14-20:

On Wednesday, Dec. 15 at 3:40 p.m., the duty officer responded to State St. to investigate an outside burning complaint. The duty officer returned to service at 3:50 p.m.

On Friday, Dec. 17, at 7:21 a.m., the department responded to Forest St. for a medical assist. The department returned to service at 7:41 a.m.

On Sunday, Dec. 19, at 6:45 p.m., the department responded to High St. for a carbon monoxide detector activation. The department returned to service at 7:24 p.m.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

E-mail items to mharrison@turley.com or mail to Calendar Editor, Journal Register, 24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069, for receipt by Monday of week for publication.

Editor's note: Due to the coronavirus pandemic, events featured in the Journal Register, including those previewed in stories, briefs and on the calendar page, may be canceled with little notice. *The Journal Register encourages readers to contact event coordinators and organizers for updated event times. Have an event to promote? Email the information (in a Word doc or as email text - no PDFs, please - to mharrison@turley.com.*

NOW

CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS IN STORY AND SONG: First Church of Monson at 5 High Street invites everyone to join with them to Celebrate Christmas in story and song. Led by the First Church Music Committee, the 10 a.m. service on Sunday, Dec. 26, will feature the telling of the stories of several Christmas carols, the reading of poetry, and the singing of seasonal favorites. After the service, light refreshments will be served in fellowship hall.

SOON

MIX & MINGLE: The Young Professional Society of Greater Springfield and the Ad Club of Western Massachusetts will host annual Mix & Mingle membership event 5:30 to 8 p.m. Jan. 20 at Paper City Bar & Grill, 241 Whiting Farms Road, Holyoke. For more, go to springfielddyps.com.

SIGN UP

Friends of the Palmer Senior Center is sponsoring a trip in the spring: "The Parade of Nations & Virginia International Tattoo (formerly the Norfolk Azalea Festival)". April 28-May 1, 4 days/3 nights, \$599 per person double occupancy. Package includes: three nights lodging, three breakfasts, three full course dinners, including The Spirit of Norfolk Dinner Cruise, Performance of the Virginia International Tattoo Show, reserved seats for the 69th Annual Parade of Nations and more. The Virginia International Tattoo incorporates groups from around the world including acrobats, choral groups and precision

military drill teams. Full payment due upon reservation by Jan. 28, 2022. Masks, ID and Vaccination Card required. Flyers are available at the Palmer Senior Center. Feel free to inform your friends, relatives and others about this fun filled trip - all are welcome to come! For more information and reservations, contact Betty Koss 413-668-7213 or Loretta Madden 413-323-4166.

INTERESTS

KEEP HOMESTEAD MUSEUM at 35 Ely Rd., Monson. Nature trails are open daily until dusk for hiking, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing. Trail maps can be found in the parking lot. The Phillips Sculpture Garden is open year-round (handouts in box on one of the sign posts). For more information call 413-267-4137, email khm@keephomesteadmuseum.org or visit www.keephomesteadmuseum.org.

THE QUABOAG VALLEY QUILTERS GUILD is looking for new members. The Guild meets on the first, third and fifth Thursdays of the month at 1 p.m. in the basement of the Palmer Historical and Cultural Center, 2072 Main St., Three Rivers. The Guild is a no pressure group with varying degrees of accomplishments, from novice to Big E "Best In Show" winners. The membership fee is \$48 a year. For more information, contact Barbara Beaulieu at 267-4044 or Merry Mombourquette at 283-7577. Follow them on Facebook.

MONSON WOODWACKERS wood carving club meets every Thursday at Monson Senior Center on Main Street in Monson from 6-8 p.m. The club meets throughout the year. Membership is \$10 for the year, payable in September. Anyone interested should call Barbara Mackintosh at 413-237-8303. There are many beginner projects and experienced teachers, as well, within the club.

STAINED GLASS MAKING CLASS will be held on Thursdays at the Holland Community Center from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. or 6-9 p.m. Glass and tools are supplied. Take

six classes for \$48. Class sizes are limited and are open to all ages. For more information call Tom Baltazar at 508-245-2525.

DIAMOND NATIONAL/CASCADES DIAMOND. Did you every work there? Former employees meet on the third Tuesday of every month at Burgundy Brook Restaurant on Route 181 in Palmer from 9-10 a.m. The stories shared are often colorful but old friendships are renewed.

ONGOING

MUSIC LESSONS, YOGA AND MORE: Just because days are short, and the thermometer reads cold doesn't mean there's nothing to do. Hitchcock Academy constantly works with instructors to offer options to its community members. Look for upcoming classes in yoga, tai chi, meditation, and fencing. Hitchcock Academy follows all current COVID guidelines for cleaning and social distancing and anyone using the facility must wear a mask.

All information regarding current class offerings, events, and registration are available at hitchcockacademy.org.

FREE FOOD PROGRAM: The Massachusetts Military Support Foundation has found a way to get food to families that need it. The Farmers to Families program, set up by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, is part of a Coronavirus Food Assistance Program that help people all over the nation and has a site in Springfield open to all residents. The program will supply food kits with fresh fruits and vegetables, dairy products and meat products that distributes package into family-sized boxes. You can register for your food kit at mmsfi.org. On the website choose "Springfield, Ma" as your pick up site and sign-up. Register for one week or all four with easy one time registration. Food kit includes fresh dairy, protein, and produce totaling 30+ pounds of food. Military families are encouraged to sign-up but registration is open to the public.

RAIL | from page 1

- Making Amtrak the operator for East-West Rail
- Establishing a Western Mass Intercity Rail Authority to regulate it
- Defining the East-West line as an "Intercity Passenger Rail" to help facilitate future funding
- A cost-sharing approach for state-supported services operated by Amtrak to "improve clarity on annual costs" and other factors.

Slesinger said MassDOT isn't itself positioned to become a rail authority, "And around the country, where rail has been successful, they have an authority that is locally-focused."

Although she had to sit through repeated references to MassDOT's assailed ridership estimates - Lesser and others, including the Citizens for a Palmer Rail Stop, have been fighting for a revised estimate they say should be over 720,000 with Hartford riders compared to 469,000 without - Slesinger gave the impression that MassDOT shouldn't be considered a chunk of shell in the rail advocates' egg salad.

"This is all making the case," for the rail line, Slesinger said of the work done by the PVPC and other stakeholders.

"We are actively having conversations with Amtrak about what we can do in the short-term as the long-term develops," she said.

Economic impact

As they have in the past, Lesser, Wray and others hammered away at the decades of what they see as missed opportunities to growth the region. Despite that, it's not too late, they said to spur an economic boom that could bring between 20,000 and 40,000 high-paying jobs, solve the housing crunch by attracting residential development and create fertile environments for progress all along the rail corridor and beyond.

Wry repeated a projection mentioned in studies and presentations

that the rail line could produce a 10 to 1 return on investment. Others have brought up environmental and other quality of life benefits by increasing mobility and opportunity while taking carbon-producing cars off the road.

The most important thing at this point, Lesser said, "is we need a unified federal, state, and local coordination" and said things are trending in the right direction, including a bill introduced by U.S. Sen. Ed Markey that would bypass potential cost-to-benefit benchmarks that may be unrealistic, and allies such as Rep. Jim McGovern, who chairs the U.S. House Rules Committee and Rep. Richard Neal, who chairs the House Ways and Means Committee.

"The second most important thing is making sure our state, MassDOT, puts forward the best application that depends on ridership estimates. We're not going to take 'no' for an answer."

Local support

In Palmer, officials are supportive and optimistic.

"This is our best shot for the East-West rail," Town Manager Ryan McNutt said recently.

"It will be a huge benefit to Palmer to have a train station stop in our downtown on the East West railroad. I believe the future for linking Massachusetts to New York, linking Massachusetts together, linking Western Massachusetts to Boston, it would be transformative."

Town Planner Linda Leduc, who represents the town on various commissions and committees, had similar sentiments. And in a recent, lengthy response to the DOT white paper, the The Western Mass Rail Coalition, which includes Trains in the Valley and Citizens for a Palmer Rail Stop, zeroed in on a particular section:

"MassDOT officials believe the recommendations in this white paper will help position the Commonwealth to take advantage of the federal fund-

ing opportunities and is the most logical course to develop an East-West rail corridor and grow other rail services in Western Massachusetts."

As part of its response, the coalition said, "We applaud MassDOT for stepping forward at this important juncture with these two fundamental recommendations for East-West Rail, thereby providing a way forward for this project. The Western Mass Rail Coalition fully endorses MassDOT's recommendation that Amtrak be the operator of choice for East-West Rail, since it is clear to us that Amtrak is the most sensible choice of operator at this time. We also strongly support MassDOT's recommendation that the legislature establish a Western Massachusetts Intercity Rail Authority - an entity that would develop, manage, and oversee the East-West Rail service."

However, "There is no mention in the white paper of how the Western Massachusetts Intercity Rail Authority would be funded," the coalition said in its statement.

"We find this to be a notable omission that we hope will be addressed soon in some detail. We (also) question why MassDOT has assumed that the Board of Directors for the new authority will be appointed by the Governor of Massachusetts. There are other models that could be used to determine the composition of the board. For example, the board members of the Woods Hole, Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket Steamship Authority are appointed solely by the local elected officials in the region."

It's also worth noting that Gov. Baker announced earlier this fall that he does not plan to seek another term. If he's succeeded by a more rail-friendly governor after the November 2022 election, East-West Rail advocates just might get a new train set for Christmas next year.

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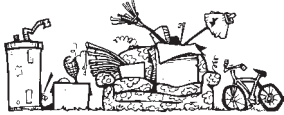
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HELP WANTED

MEALS ON WHEELS DRIVER. 4 days a week. Valid MA License. Good interpersonal skills. Some heavy lifting. Experience working with elderly a plus. Send letter of interest and resume to: **Monson Council on Aging, 106 Main Street, Monson, MA 01057**

TOWN OF WILBRAHAM DPW WORKERS (2)

HEAVY EQUIPMENT OPERATORS (2) The Town of Wilbraham is looking to fill multiple Department of Public Works vacancies for DPW Workers (2) and Heavy Equipment Operators (2). For application and more information please visit **www.wilbraham-ma.gov**. Application review begins immediately. Open until filled. EOE

REAL ESTATE

COMMERCIAL RENTALS

FOR RENT APPROXIMATELY 800 SQ. FT. with easy access. Good for storage etc. Also have approximately 1600 Sq. Ft. unit with street level entrance. Call (413)967-7772 for more information. Reasonable rent.

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REAL ESTATE

FOR RENT



ALL REAL ESTATE advertised herein is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act, which makes it illegal to advertise "any preference, limitation, or discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, or national origin, or intention to make any such preference, limitation, or discrimination." We will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate which is in violation of the law. All persons are hereby informed that all dwellings advertised are available on an equal opportunity basis.

HILLSIDE VILLAGE APARTMENTS

APPLICATIONS NOW BEING ACCEPTED FOR ONE, TWO AND THREE BEDROOM APARTMENTS

+Heat and hot water included
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+Fully Appliance
+Community Room
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+Cats Welcome
+Extra Storage
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17 Convent Hill,
Ware, MA



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SECURE STORAGE Winter Special. Rent a 5x10: 2 months payment up front, 3rd month free. Call Mary (413)531-3722

FOR RENT



All real estate advertising in this newspaper is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act of 1968, which makes it illegal to advertise any preference, limitation or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status (number of children and or pregnancy), national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, or any intention to make any such preference, limitation or discrimination.

This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate that is in violation of the law. Our readers are hereby informed that all dwellings advertised in this newspaper are available on an equal opportunity basis. To complain about discrimination call The Department of Housing and Urban Development " HUD" toll-free at 1-800-669-9777. For the N.E. area, call HUD at 617-565-5308. The toll free number for the hearing impaired is 1-800-927-9275.

FILL OUT AND MAIL THIS MONEY MAKER

MAIL TO: Classifieds, 24 Water St., Palmer, MA 01069
or call: 413-283-8393

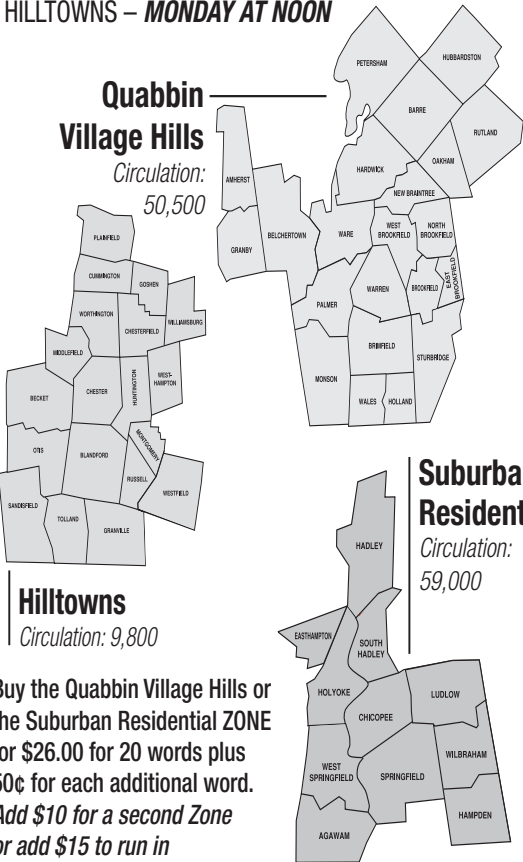
DEADLINES:

QUABBIN & SUBURBAN – **FRIDAY AT NOON**
HILLTOWNS – **MONDAY AT NOON**

CATEGORY:

1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20
21	Base Price \$26.50	22	Base Price \$27.00
23	Base Price \$27.50	24	Base Price \$28.00
25	Base Price \$28.50	26	Base Price \$29.00
27	Base Price \$29.50	28	Base Price \$30.00
29	Base Price \$30.50	30	Base Price \$31.00
31	Base Price \$31.50	32	Base Price \$32.00
33	Base Price \$32.50	34	Base Price \$33.00
35	Base Price \$33.50	36	Base Price \$34.00
37	Base Price \$34.50	38	Base Price \$35.00
39	Base Price \$35.50	40	Base Price \$36.00

Name: _____ Phone: _____
Address: _____
Town: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Number of Weeks: _____ X per week rate = \$ _____
Credit Card: ☐ MasterCard ☐ VISA ☐ Discover ☐ Cash ☐ Check# _____
Card #: _____ Exp. Date _____ CVV _____
Amount of charge: _____ Date: _____



Buy the Quabbin Village Hills or the Suburban Residential ZONE for \$26.00 for 20 words plus 50¢ for each additional word. Add \$10 for a second Zone or add \$15 to run in ALL THREE ZONES.

First ZONE base price

Add a second ZONE

Add a third ZONE

Subtotal

x Number of Weeks

TOTAL Enclosed

Includes additional words

\$10.00

\$5.00

Run my ad in the following ZONE(s):

☐ Quabbin

☐ Suburban

☐ Hilltowns

Work the School Calendar ~ No Nights or Weekends
Paid Sick Time ~ Paid Holidays ~ Paid Snow Days ~ Split Shift
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We train on our buses and lots.
Call our training dept at 413.668.6036 and apply.



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BUSINESS

Turley Publications is liberal with regard to its business coverage policies, but we do have some standards folks need to understand. First, local businesses and merchants are just as much institutions in our towns as the library and schools. Without them, there are no towns.

We will feature coverage of local businesses that are new, have a major expansion, moving, closing, under new management or ownership, celebrating a milestone anniversary, or have been thrust into the news realm. Merchants can request that coverage through the editor, or for our existing advertising clients, through their ad representatives.

For more information on business coverage for The Journal Register, please email dfarmer@turley.com.

HOLLAND COMMUNITY CENTER

All new programs, events for December

HOLLAND — The Holland Community Center at 40 Brimfield Road offers fun, educational, and life-enriching activities for all ages along with meals, services and more.

A new manicurist will be coming in to do manicures and pedicures once a month from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. beginning Jan. 4. She will be able to offer 15-minute nail trimming (finger or toe) appointments (trimming shaping and buffing) for \$22 per person. She can also offer mini manicures with nail trimming, shaping and regular polish for \$28 per person (20-minute appointment).

You must make an appointment for this service. Contact Deb at 413-245-3163 or email activities@hollandma.org.

Among upcoming events, mark your calendars for the New Year's Eve-themed Pizza Party at noon Dec. 29. Celebrate the end of 2021 with us for lunch and stay for the music at 1 pm. RSVP required for the meal. \$3 per Holland Senior, \$5 for the general public.

Did you know? The **Garden Club** is back and meets in the craft room the first Thursday of every month at 6:30 p.m.

There are nutritious, homemade meals as well. Here's a look at what's going on this month:

Don't Miss:
Dec. 29: Singer/guitarist Dezi Star makes her debut at the Center.

Help wanted:
Holland Community Center is

looking for a temporary Kitchen Manager while our current one is taking a leave of absence for the month of January. This is a paid position. However, we will not be opposed to having a volunteer come in. If you are interested in the position. Please contact Brenda at 413-245-3163 or send your resume and cover letter to CommunityCenter@hollandma.org.

Upcoming trips
The following trips are offered by from Adventure Tours of Warren. You need to contact them directly to reserve a seat by emailing adventure-tours@att.net calling 413-436-5357, or visiting adventuretoursforwarren.com:

New York Theater Weekend, Jan. 14-16 with two nights at the Art Deco Belvedere Hotel, plenty of time for shopping, theater, dining, and more. \$429 per person double occupancy, \$599 single.

Jesus Christ Superstar, Jan. 29 at Providence Performing Arts Center, includes orchestra seat and deluxe motor coach transportation. \$99.

Trapp Family Lodge, April 20-22 includes two nights at the legendary Trapp Family Lodge in Stowe, Vt. Buffet breakfasts, Cabot Cheese Annex, Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream Factory tour, Quechee Village, Vermont Country Store. \$599 double, \$799 single.

Special December events:
12/27 Bingo 1 p.m.
12/29 Desiree Star 1 p.m.

Hungry?
You can dine-in or take out meals on Mondays and Wednesdays. Take

out Pick up is 11:45 a.m.-noon. Dine-in is at noon. A \$3 donation RSVP required. Due to a wonderful donation from the Holland Council on Aging, any Holland senior resident will be able to get their lunch for a \$3 suggested donation. *

For a \$5 suggested donation you will get the entrée, a side and dessert. All ages are welcome to order.

December's Menu
Dec. 27— Ham & Cheese Sandwich w/ Soup
Wed Dec 29 — Pizza Party (RSVP)
*Please have exact change if possible

Program highlights
CRAFTER'S SOCIAL & QUILTING: Tuesdays at 10:30 a.m.—Bring your favorite project and visit with other crafters each week.

DOMINOES: Tuesdays at 10:30 a.m.—Join us every Tuesday for dominoes. We use colored, numbered pieces instead of dots, which helps if you have less than perfect eyesight. The game is pretty simple and lots of fun. We already have a few new players and they're having a good time. RSVP encouraged but walk-ins allowed. Everyone is invited and it's FREE.

MIX IT UP WITH DEBBIE: Wednesdays at 10 a.m. The class consists of core and body conditioning. Includes cardio, strength training, and stretching. Plus its lots of fun. Bring yoga mat and flat fitness band if you have it. RSVP is required. \$5 per person (\$3 for seniors).

YOGA: Wednesdays at 5 p.m.—Take time out for you. The holidays are coming and self-care is very important. Come to the Center for an hour of relaxation and self-care.

Have fun and take information home today that

you can use tomorrow!

Every Monday
Mah Jongg — 10:15 a.m.
Take out Lunch — 11:45 a.m.
Lunch — noon
Texas Hold'em — 4:30 p.m.
Every Tuesday
Crafters Social — 10:30 a.m.
Dominoes — 10:30 a.m.
Every Wednesday
Mix it Up — 10 a.m.
Take out Lunch — 11:45 a.m.
Lunch — noon
Mah Jongg — 1 p.m.
Every Thursday
Food Drive — 11 a.m.
Cribbage — 12:15 p.m.
Pitch — 5 p.m.
Yoga — 6 p.m.

Wait, there's more!
Helping Wales Community Pantry

We are still collecting food for the Wales Community Pantry. The Pantry serves the residents of Holland, Wales, and Brimfield. They need peanut butter, jelly, Spam, cereal, and other nonperishable goods. You can drop off food anytime or day the Center is open. Monetary Donations can be made out to Wales Community Pantry. Monetary Donations help the Pantry to order fresh meats and produce.

Need pet food?
Here Today, Adopted Tomorrow has been very generous helping the residents of Holland and other towns by bringing dog and cat food here each week. If you need some for your animals, please stop by any time we are open.

For more information, call the Holland Community Center at 413-245-3163, visit on Facebook or go to town.holland.ma.us/community-center.

POSITIVE MESSAGE

Local author making a difference with latest book

By Jonah Snowden
jsnowden@turley.com

LUDLOW — Following the release of her book, "I Love You So Much That..." Ludlow resident, author and sexual abuse advocate Kathy Picard has been working with local schools to further spread her positive message.

The book, which was written for children, is to raise awareness of sexual abuse and provide a safe environment for at-danger kids to speak out. To spread this message, Picard has visited local schools in the area, such as St. John the Baptist School and Belcher School. She also plans to speak to the kindergartners, first graders, second graders and third graders in Palmer Public Schools.

Also, Picard's book has been placed at the Hubbard Memorial Library, Granby Free Library, East Street Coffee Company and Outside the Box Gift Shop. Picard also has collaborated with the women's correctional facility at the Hampden County Sheriff's Department to ensure the inmates will have something to read to their children when they visit.

"The inmates have their kids come in," Picard said. "To read them a book is special."

Picard is also grateful for the support she has received from the public following the release of the children's book.

"I love it," Picard said. "It's so important. I was never read a book, my mother and



Courtesy Photos
Ludlow author Kathy Picard continues to spread the message of her recently published children's book, "I Love You So Much That..." by visiting local schools and libraries.

stepfather plopped me in front of a TV. To get my message out is a passion. I don't do it for the money as you know, I do to keep the kids as safe as they should be."

On the heels of the success of 'I Love You So Much,' Picard said she and her illustrator Debra Louise Nicholson are planning on developing another one.

"This took us 11 months to do and was worked on during COVID," Picard said. "Who knows — we could have a series of kids' books created, but it's important that it's something that hits home and it needs to be done."

To get in touch with Picard and schedule a visit or reading, or to purchase the book, email kathychildadvocate@gmail.com. Also, visit Picard's website at kathy-picard.com.

Job Connection

HELPING YOU FIND HELP

SNOW PLOW CONTRACTORS WANTED 2021-2022 WINTER SEASON

The Town of Wilbraham Department of Public Works is seeking contractors for the 2021-2022 Winter Season.

Interested contractors can obtain the 2021-2022 Plowing application form at <https://www.wilbraham-ma.gov/188/Highway>

Please submit completed form by email at

DPWnotify@wilbraham-ma.gov

or you can drop off completed forms to

the Public Works office located at

Town Hall 240 Springfield Street, Wilbraham MA 01095.

Should you have any questions

please contact the Department of Public Works office at **413-596-2800 x208**

everyone shines
SUNSHINE VILLAGE

Come Join Our Team

Job Title: Direct Support Professional

Location:

Three Rivers, MA

Hours:

35 hours/week - Monday through Friday 8:30am-3:30pm

Educational Requirements:

High School Diploma/ GED/or Equivalent

Other Requirements:

Ability to lift 30 lbs. comfortably, a valid driver's license and a reliable vehicle.

Job Summary:

Development and implementation of active treatment and habilitation programs for individuals with developmental disabilities. The ideal candidate will be a positive role model with good communication skills who can work alone and as a team.

Salary:

\$15.50/hour to start, \$15.90 upon completion of introductory period (90 days)

Benefits:

Health, Dental, Vision, 401K w/match, LTD, EAP, PTO

Accepting applications at

75 Litwin Lane, Chicopee, MA 01020.

AA/EOE. Sunshine Village is a great place to work!

PALMER LANNING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 40A, Section 5 M.G.L. the Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing on **Monday, January 3, 2022 at 7:30 p.m.** in the Town Hall Administration Building to consider amending the Town of Palmer Zoning Map for a change of zoning districts from the Rural Residential and Suburban Residential Districts to the Highway Business District. Six parcels are affected by this zoning amendment, specifically L8 High Street (Map 7, Lot 8), 1002 High Street (Map 7, Lot 7), L6 High Street (Map 7, Lot 6), L5 French Street (Map 7, Lot 5), 54 Walnut Street (Map 7, Lot 4), and 24 Converse Street (Map 7, Lot 3).

A copy of the map may be inspected on the Planning Department website at www.townofpalmer.com/ planning or at the Planning Department office at Town Hall by appointment only.

Anyone interested in more information or wishing to be heard on the application can contact the Planning Department at 413-283-2605 or appear at the time and place designated above.

This notice shall also be posted on the Massachusetts Newspaper Publishers Association's (MNPA) website (<http://masspublicnotices.org>).

Michael Marciniac,
Chairman
12/16, 12/23/2021

PALMER PLANNING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 40A, Section 5 M.G.L. the Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing on **Monday, January 3, 2022 at 7:15 p.m.** in the Town Hall Administration Building to consider amending the Town of Palmer Zoning Map for a change of zoning districts from the Suburban Residential District to the Highway Business District. Six parcels are affected by this zoning amendment, specifically 101 Ware Street (Map 74, Lot 32), 0 Breckenridge Street (Map 74, Lot 31), Ware Street (Map 74, Lot 34), 49 Ware Street (Map 74, Lot 35), 37 Ware Street (Map 74, Lot 36) and Breckenridge Street (Map 74, Lot 37).

A copy of the map may be inspected on the Planning

Department website at www.townofpalmer.com/ planning or at the Planning Department office at Town Hall by appointment only.

Anyone interested in more information or wishing to be heard on the application can contact the Planning Department at 413-283-2605 or appear at the time and place designated above.

This notice shall also be posted on the Massachusetts Newspaper Publishers Association's (MNPA) website (<http://masspublicnotices.org>).

Michael Marciniac,
Chairman
12/16, 12/23/2021

TOWN OF WALES LEGAL NOTICE

In accordance with the provisions of M.G.L. Ch 40A §10 & §11, the **Wales Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a Public Hearing on January 10th, 2022, at the Wales Town Offices at 6:00 PM**, on the application of Frank LaRosa, of 7 Cordially Colony, for a variance in terms of the Town of Wales Zoning By-law Sec. 4. 2.. The Town of Wales Zoning By-Law Sec. 8.5 states "The Zoning Board of Appeals may authorize upon appeal, or upon petition with respect to particular land or structures, a variance from the terms of this Bylaw". Specifically, the applicant wishes to construct a 26 x 22' garage. Any person interested and wishing to be heard on this application should refer to the town website (www.townofwales.net) under zoning board agenda for the above date to participate virtually. If you have any questions or concerns, please email: planning@townofwales.net 12/23, 12/30/2021

12/23/2021

12/23/2021

PALMER CONSERVATION COMMISSION PUBLIC MEETING NOTICE

In accordance with the Wetlands Protection Act of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Chapter 131, Section 40, and the Town of Palmer Wetlands Ordinance, Chapter 168, the Palmer Conservation Commission will hold a public meeting on **Tuesday, January 18, 2022 at 6:30 PM** on the application of the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, 1 Rabbit Hill Road, Westborough, MA 01581.

The applicant is requesting a determination to see if the work associated with the Roger Reed Fish Hatchery Dam Pipeline Replacement is subject to the MA Wetlands Protection Act and the Town of Palmer Wetlands Protection Ordinance. The work will occur within inland Bank, Bordering Vegetated Wetlands, Land Under Waterbodies and Waterways, Bordering Land Subject to Flooding, 200-foot Riverfront Area, and the 100-foot Buffer Zone.

The location of the proposed project is 693 Ware Street, Palmer, MA 01069 and is also known as: Assessor's Map 31-29. 12/23/2021

NOTICE OF MORTGAGEE'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE

By virtue of and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage given by Ethan Kean to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for Merrimack Mortgage Company, Inc., dated May 26, 2009 and recorded in the Hampden County Registry of Deeds in Book 17805, Page 277, as modified by a certain modification agreement dated November 1, 2018, and recorded with said Hampden County Registry of Deeds in Book 22414, Page 574 of which mortgage the undersigned is the present holder, by assignment from:

Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. ("MERS"), as nominee for Merrimack Mortgage Company, Inc., its successors and assigns to JPMorgan Chase Bank, National Association, recorded on May 14, 2012, in Book No. 19255, at Page 267 for breach of the conditions of said mortgage and

for the purpose of foreclosing, the same will be sold at Public Auction at **4:00 PM on January 19, 2022**, on the mortgaged premises located at 31 Sturbridge Road, Brimfield, Hampden County, Massachusetts, all and singular the premises described in said mortgage,

TO WIT:

The land and building thereon in Brimfield, Hampden County, Massachusetts bounded and described as follows: Shown as Lot number three on a plan entitled, "Plan of Land in Brimfield, Massachusetts surveyed for Thaddeus J. Jr. & Kathleen D. Cembura" dated July 30, 2002 by Lewis & Cook Surveyors, Inc. Belchertown-Palmer, MA, which said plan is recorded in the Hampden District Registry of Deeds, Plan Book 326, Plan 85; Beginning at an iron pipe on the easterly line of Sturbridge Road which is the southwesterly corner of said lot; Thence N. 19° 06' 28" E. 150.00 feet along the line of Sturbridge Road to an iron pipe; Thence S. 76° 37' 56" E. 20.80 feet to an iron pipe; Thence S. 18° 24' 44" W. 48.67 feet to an iron pipe; Thence S. 71° 35' 16" E. 44.75 feet to an iron pipe; Thence N. 18° 24' 44" E. 60.55 feet to an iron pipe; Thence S. 85° 36' 08" E. 281.75 feet to an iron pipe; Thence S. 15° 20' 45" W. 247.05 feet to an iron pipe; Thence N. 69° 11' 50" W. 354.17 feet to the point of beginning. Containing 66,000 square feet more or less being the same premises conveyed to mortgagor by deed recorded herewith.

For mortgagor's(s') title see deed recorded with Hampden County Registry of Deeds in Book 17805, Page 275.

These premises will be sold and conveyed subject to and with the benefit of all rights, rights of way, restrictions, easements, covenants, liens or claims in the nature of liens, improvements, public assessments, any and all unpaid taxes, tax titles, tax liens, water and sewer liens and any other municipal assessments or liens or existing encumbrances of record which are in force and are applicable, having priority over said mortgage, whether or not reference to such restrictions, easements, improvements, liens or encumbrances is made in the deed.

TERMS OF SALE:
A deposit of Five Thousand (\$5,000.00) Dollars by certified or bank check will be required to

be paid by the purchaser at the time and place of sale. The balance is to be paid by certified or bank check at Harmon Law Offices, P.C., 150 California St., Newton, Massachusetts 02458, or by mail to P.O. Box 610389, Newton Highlands, Massachusetts 02461-0389, within thirty (30) days from the date of sale. Deed will be provided to purchaser for recording upon receipt in full of the purchase price. The description of the premises contained in said mortgage shall control in the event of an error in this publication.

Other terms, if any, to be announced at the sale.

JPMORGAN CHASE BANK, N.A.

Present holder of said mortgage

By its Attorneys,
HARMON LAW OFFICES, P.C.

150 California St.
Newton, MA 02458
(617)558-0500
17805

12/23, 12/30/2021, 1/06/2022

LEGAL NOTICE

Pursuant to the provisions of MA Gen. Laws, Chap. 255, Sec. 39A, the following vehicles will be sold at public auction for towing and storage charges due: **NISSAN VIN:1N4AA5AXDC816539 Daniel Knapp 2052 Main ST RM39 Three Rivers, MA; SUBARU VIN:4S4BP61C476344532 Jacob Chapman 26 Bouden ST Palmer, MA; FORD VIN:1FTNX21L72EB96269 Yves Lachance 147 Jim Ash RD Bondsville, MA; FORD VIN:2FAFP71W23X171734 Alexander Phaneuf 70 Bradway RD Monson, MA.** This auction is to take place on January 7, 2022, 10:00 A.M. at LaBonte's & Son LLC, 241 Wilbraham St., Palmer, MA 01069 12/23, 12/30/2021, 01/06/2022

Please check the accuracy of your legal notice prior to submission (i.e., date, time, spelling). Also, be sure the requested publication date coincides with the purpose of the notice, or as the law demands. Thank you.

NEW BUSINESS

The Mermaid and the Mariner specializes in an array of artisan decor and more

By Jonah Snowden
jsnowden@turley.com

MONSON – After five years of running their business inside of their own home, Monson residents Elaine and Mark Fuller now have a space for their craft store, The Mermaid and the Mariner.

This craft store, which recently opened at 245 Palmer Road, offers a variety of repurposed, rustic, country, nautical, primitive and custom items, including antique window frames, art quilts, home decorations, fabrics, gnomes and more.

“We saw other people doing things like this on the internet,” Elaine said.

“We started refinishing items and people like them and we thought we could do something like this.”

The Fullers hosted their official grand opening Dec. 11-12, which received a lot of support.

“In the first hour, we did good,” Elaine said. “I don’t expect it to be packed all of the time, which is fine.”

Aside from originally running their business inside of their home, the Fullers have sold their products in vendor markets as well, which has helped them establish a loyal customer base

“They are what keep us going,” Elaine said.

“We have people pinging us every day on Facebook and Etsy. We have a following and whenever I put a new product together, everybody’s commenting, which is nice.”

To encourage potential customers to stop by, Elaine emphasizes the artisan aspect of the shop. “It’s not mass-produced,” Elaine said.

“Every gnome, every sign is completely different. You’re not going to see a lot of similar things you would see in a store. We try to be unique.”

Elaine also said she likes being creative, designing items and painting.

“I think it’s rewarding,” Elaine said. “You feel rewarded when you build

something. I was a teacher and that’s a high-stress job and this is a different kind of stress, but it’s manageable and something we can control for ourselves.”

As time goes on, the Fullers plan on



Turley Publications staff photos by Jonah Snowden
Elaine and Mark Fuller have taken their business The Mermaid and Mariner out of their home and into a shop they opened at 245 Palmer Road.



A variety of repurposed, rustic, country, nautical, primitive and custom items are available at The Mermaid and the Mariner.

adding more features to their craft store. Mark said they plan to showcase some items, such as the benches, outside.

“We have products that can go outside and be displayed like our planter chairs,” Mark said. Elaine also said she plans on running craft workshops as well.

For more information on The Mermaid and the Mariner, visit them on Facebook. The craft store located at 245 Palmer Road, can be reached at 413-583-1860 and 401-871-8881 and is open 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday and 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Thursday.

Region gathers to lay wreaths at Veterans Memorial Cemetery

By Shelby Macri
Staff Writer

AGAWAM – The Agawam location of the Massachusetts Veterans Memorial Cemetery saw groups of people filling up the space in front of and around the Administration Building last Saturday morning.

These groups of people came by the bus loads well before 10 a.m. to help lay wreaths with Wreaths Across America for the National Wreaths Across America Day, held on Dec. 18 this year.

While explaining the process of laying the wreaths the group mentioned the date of next year’s wreath laying, showing that they’re already planning for the future. While many people attended on Saturday to lay the wreaths; the Wreaths Across America Location Coordinator for Agawam Gina Willette and the Director of the cemetery Rich Bastien mentioned the cleanup day for the wreaths as well. They both said the cleanup of the wreaths is as important as the laying and the date for cleanup will be Tuesday, Jan. 18.

The purpose of laying the wreaths is to honor those who have fought and sacrificed for this nation and to teach the community on the importance of remembering our veterans. Willette’s husband Brian Willette is the Commander of Purple Heart Chapter in Massachusetts and acted as a Master of Ceremonies and the three spoke to the crowd gathered before the wreath laying began, reiterating both his wife and Bastien’s point of the importance of this ceremony and activity of laying wreaths.

“It’s my honor to be a host today for wreaths across America 2021 and it’s so great to see everybody back here, as we were two years ago,” Willette said. “We’re really showing up here, last year was a very small event to get the wreaths out and I’m glad this pandemic; hopefully is close to being behind us. It is great to see everybody here today.”

The group of three made a make shift stage from the bed of a Jeep while manning a mega phone for the audience crowded in front of the Veterans Memorial

Cemetery Administration Building, they were joined by the Sons of the American Legion Chaplain Don Lindsay who said an opening prayer before veteran Larry White sang the National Anthem. The group also consists of President of the Friends of the Massachusetts Veterans Memorial Cemetery Paul Barabani, who honored World War II veteran Harvey Lafleur from Chicopee who was present at the wreath laying ceremony. The day was filled with remembrance and honor from the very beginning, as well as many families, groups of friends, and members of the city and state government.

Barabani spoke about some background pieces that go into making the national wreath laying possible, including that the group he’s the president of is a non-profit organization and all of their proceeds go back to supporting the cemetery in whatever it needs. He also mentioned the Eversource Veterans Association and said it was the biggest sponsor of the wreath laying this year as they donated 1,500 wreaths to support the event on Saturday.

Barabani thanked the Agawam Police Department for the traffic assistance they provided throughout the event as well as the Coast Guard veteran who donated the use of the busses that shuttled people from their parked cars at Six Flags to the cemetery and back at the end of the event. He also thanked Six Flags for allowing people to park their cars in the parking area for the event, he also mentioned that the donations for wreaths from citizens helped greatly. Barabani said their backs were against the wall for the wreath laying event as they only had 50% of their goal, until media outlets spread the word and people were able to contribute to the cause and raise the total amount needed of 8,500 wreaths.

“One of the donors who responded to that sponsored 150 wreaths, and he said he had a death in the family and it was the staff and the ceremony at the cemetery that put his family at peace,” Barabani said. “And that’s what happens here at the Agawam Veterans Cemetery.”



Staff photos by Shelby Macri
From left; Patty Henault joins Norah, Nathan, and Tim Ayers in laying wreaths at the Massachusetts Veterans Cemetery in Agawam.



From left; World War 2 veteran Harvey Lafleur was honored by Rich Bastien and Paul Barabani.

The staff at the ceremony and everyone involved in each working part of this event are working hard throughout the entire year to honor veterans and their families, to bring a sense of honor and respect among remembrance to those who visit the grounds. Barabani spoke highly of Gina Willette, saying for the past five years the total amount of wreaths have been brought to and set up at the cemetery and it’s all a testament to Gina who brought the program to the city and shows leadership each year.

“As Paul said, we started here with 150 wreaths in 2012 and we have grown as a community and with wreaths, and every year our goal keeps going up and up and up,” Gina Willette said. “So I really want to thank everybody for being her today, today is a big community event.”

She said the Veterans Wreaths are a symbol of remembrance.

They are not decorating the

graves but rather honoring American heroes. The wreaths were to be placed nicely at the graves with the bows at the top and nicely displayed, she mentioned that the bows may need to be adjusted and by the end of the ceremony each bow was in place on each wreath across the 10 sections of the cemetery.

Willette also mentioned that people can donate for next year’s wreaths starting Saturday, Dec. 18 to Tuesday, Jan. 14.

She said during this time any donation made for a wreath will be matched. So all donations are doubled from now until next month helping next year’s ceremony. People can contact the Friends of the Massachusetts Veterans Memorial Cemetery to donate, anyone interested can call 413-821-9500 or visit the website at www.agawamfriends.org.

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